



Department of Conservation and Recreation  
Stewardship Council Meeting  
September 29, 2006  
Community Boating, Boston, MA

Meeting Minutes

*Stewardship Councilors in Attendance:* Chairman Dick Cross, Councilors Whitney Hatch, Julian Agyeman, Dan Wolf, John Natoli, Michael Dutton, Henry Lee and Richard Ward.

*Public Attendees:* Dick Miller, Lake Cochituate Advisory Council; Carole Berkowitz, Protect Our Water Resources; Mike Ryan, Friends of the Fells; Renata von Tscharner, Charles River Conservancy; Heidi Ricci, Mass Audubon, and James McCaffrey, Sierra Club.

*DCR Staff in Attendance:* Commissioner Stephen Burrington, Secretary Robert Golledge (EOEA), Phil Griffith (EOEA), Tricia Singer, Marianne Fleckner, Patrice Kish, Leslie Luchonok, Margie Lynch, Nikki Belmonte, Joe Rotondo and Jack Donahue.

**I. Call To Order (1:05 p.m.), Chairman Cross**

- a. Chairman Cross welcomed the new Secretary of Environmental Affairs, Robert Golledge. Secretary Golledge remarked that he will focus on exciting initiatives and the experiences people have at DCR facilities.
- b. Chairman Cross introduced the newest member of the Stewardship Council, Mr. John Natoli.
- c. Chairman Cross reconfirmed three *Strategic Goals* which are: to have an agency capable of delivering world class conservation and recreation services; to demonstrate progress towards world class parks; and to generate public appreciation and support for the resources we manage.

**II. Commissioner's Report, Commissioner Stephen Burrington**

**a. Visible progress**

- i. DCR successfully mounted its longest beach and pool season ever, with facilities open from Memorial Day to Labor Day. Daily water quality testing was completed with well over 99% accuracy.
- ii. Maintenance was a major theme this summer as mowing grass along the parkways became the single largest issue. \$500K Urban Parks and \$250K State Parks was spent on equipment for mowing, landscaping and beach sanitizing.
- iii. One of the many incredible events hosted by DCR this summer was the sand castle contest which saw 100,000 people on Revere Beach.

**b. Building a great agency**

- i. Bill Salomaa, Director of Dam Safety, will receive the Commonwealth's Manuel Carballo award. Bill implemented new dam safety regulations and led DCR and the Commonwealth through two dam crises this year with no increase in staffing. This is the second consecutive year a DCR employee has won this award.
- ii. Enormous strides have been made in financial systems and the quality of data under the new Administration & Finance team led by Marianne Fleckner.
- iii. District Managers are now in place in Urban and State Divisions. This has brought a fresh view to management in the field and created better relationships with constituents.
- iv. This fall a focus will be placed on Planning & Engineering project management to administer the FY06 \$140M capital budget.

**c. Public confidence & support**

- i. External Affairs is in the process of creating consistent proactive means of outreach to the public for DCR's programs. One example will be in forest harvesting.
- ii. Spectacle Island had a great season, but inter-island transportation needs improvement.

- iii. Resource management planning has been delayed due to lack of funding to hire staff. DCR is rethinking how to move ahead and find resources to bring on staff.

Councilor Lee inquired about the Storrow Drive Tunnel process. Commissioner Burrington stated that the MEPA certificate was received in the spring. The traffic modeling work has been slow to get off the ground due to competing priorities within the Executive Office of Transportation. The draft Environmental Impact Report is in progress and will outline design options. There is also question about ventilation systems requirements, which may narrow down the design options.

### **III. Committee Updates and Meeting Schedules**

#### **a. Finance Committee, *Whitney Hatch***

- i. The Committee met and was given a presentation by Marianne Fleckner on internal control mechanisms, which DCR is currently drafting a manual for. New MMARS reports and budget building database have greatly improved detailed financial information and automated budget management.
- ii. Next steps for the Committee include working with DCR staff on FY08 budget direction, and discuss priorities that the Council should focus on. Marianne's team has been asked to develop summary reports on a quarterly basis to help guide the Committee and provide regular sharing of hard numbers.

#### **b. Policy Committee, *Julian Agyeman***

- i. The Committee has not met yet to determine the breakdown of policies into categories.
- ii. The public participation policy will be addressed by Christina at the next meeting.

#### **c. Resource Management Plan Committee, *Henry Lee***

- i. DCR continues to move ahead with old RMPs, but there is a stall on new RMPs until budget situation remedies itself.
- ii. Councilor Lee is concerned with the lack of access to logging plans as demonstrated in the Robinson State Park harvesting issue. He feels the freedom of information act is slow and difficult, and more of a hindrance. He would like to see a more transparent process which advertises the criteria and encourages public participation. He is also interested how the fully funded forestry staff coordinates and integrates with the under funded RMP group.

Chairman Cross asked Commissioner Burrington to report back to the Council on forest harvest public relations process.

### **VI. Adoption of National Monument to the Forefathers Resource Management Plan, *Patrice Kish***

- a. Ms. Kish gave a presented the resource management plan, which can be accessed at [www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/rmp/rmp-forefathers.htm](http://www.mass.gov/dcr/stewardship/rmp/rmp-forefathers.htm).
- b. The Forefathers property was a gift to Commonwealth in 2001 and is a popular tourist destination in the Plymouth Rock area. The need for a plan grew from requests from the operations staff and a very active friends group poised to raise money.
- c. Priority recommendations are organized into categories. Public safety recommendations include providing security lighting, conserving the bas-reliefs, addressing woodland surrounding and removing hazard trees. Restoration and enhancement recommendations include putting forth more conservation efforts and improving the view. Use enhancement recommendations include providing interpretive programs and signage, restoring the site to its historic appearance and improving universal access. Resource enhancement recommendations include restoring the remaining historic features and removing invasive plant species.

- d. The Forefathers property is one of three facilities in a management unit overseen by two full-time staff. The recommendations above require additional equipment, cyclical maintenance by specialists and volunteers, and ideally two seasonal interpreters.
- e. Some implementation has already begun including the restoration of the marble bas-relief panels and establishment of an annual tree pruning contract.

Councilor Lee noted the financial implications of taking on this plan and applauded DCR for an excellent and objective report.

Councilor Lee motioned to approve the Monument of the Forefathers RMP. Motion was passed with *all in favor*.

**VII. Adoption of DCR Forest Reserves, Bob O'Connor, EOE**

- a. Mr. O'Connor presented the final Forest Reserve designations, which will put 1% of the Commonwealth's land into protection from human change in perpetuity. The land is divided into 9 forest reserves and any significant changes will require Stewardship Council vote.
- b. Secretary Gollidge publicly announced the initiative at Jug End on Sept. 21. This work is the result of four years of technical studies, public participation and nonprofit partnerships. A use management plan for each reserve is being produced and the Council will review and approve these as they are completed. Smaller reserves will be identified and proposed for designation within these individual management plans.
- c. The forest reserves meet three goals: (1) allow nature to take its course within various unfragmented ecosystems; (2) add to the total acreage of old growth forest and; (3) provide basis for species studies.

Councilor Dutton remarked on the strong public support DCR and EOE built within the local communities. He inquired about fire control measures. Mr. O'Connor replied that prescribed burns would be used.

Councilor Natoli asked if these reserves were formerly disturbed. Mr. O'Connor replied that they had been.

Leslie Luchonok of DCR remarked that the forest reserves are incorporated in the land zone stewardship guidelines for resource management planning.

Councilor Ward motioned to approve the designation of the Forest Reserves. The motion was approved with *all in favor*.

**VIII. Adoption of Memorial Gift Policy, Margie Lynch**

- a. Margie Lynch of the DCR partnership office was available to answer questions on the policy on behalf of Sharon Hoey.
- b. Councilor Agyeman reiterated that the policy committee is establishing a 3-category system for policy consideration: category 1 includes policies in which the committee would like to be involved in shaping; category 2 includes policies the committee would like to review; and category 3 includes policies that the committee does not have a vested interest in. The Memorial Gift Category would fall into category 3. Commissioner Burrington encouraged the committee to reconsider their designation of the policy from category 3 to category 2 due to the external implications the policy has.
- c. Both Councilors Agyeman and Lee commented that the policy was not distributed prior to the meeting. Commissioner Burrington stated that this is the same final draft that was presented at

the June meeting and Tricia Singer, policy liaison, confirmed this. A decision on how to proceed was tabled until the next meeting.

- d. Councilor Lee suggested that short summaries of the policies highlighting the pros and cons would be helpful.

**IX. Approval of Minutes from the May 25 Meeting - all in favor**

- a. Chairman Cross also mentioned that a list of 2007 proposed dates is included in the packet. He asked the Councilors to review and be ready to comment on the schedule at the next meeting.

**X. Public Comment**

- a. **Dick Miller**, from Lake Cochituate Advisory Council, stated his concern that DCR's policy on bicycling conflicts with the new MassHighway bicycle and pedestrian guidelines that provide for bike lanes on the road, citing an MDC reservation policy that moves bikes off the road and onto sidewalks. Mr. Miller also commented on DCR's failure on rapid response, citing the placement of Solar Bee circulators after the growing season for Eurasian milfoil. Mr. Miller also stated his concern for state participation in the design process of the Cochituate rail trail, specifically on the committee that the town of Natick will be appointing to deal with the acquisition of property near the Natick Mall. Commissioner Burrington stated that no DCR policy states that bicycles should be routed onto sidewalks and bike lanes are being created on DCR parkways such as Memorial Drive in compliance with MassHighway's guidelines.
- b. **Renata von Tschanner**, Charles River Conservancy, thanked DCR for its event support. She suggested that meetings similar to the MDC's weekly Board meetings where decisions were made for the agency be established for DCR. Some type of weekly update would be helpful. Councilor Lee suggested putting this type of information on the web site and updating weekly.
- c. **Heidi Ricci**, from Mass Audubon, provided copies of the Forest & Parks Partnerships press release and thanked EOEA/DCR for designating parts of the Mohawk Trail State Forest/Savoy State as a forest reserve. Ms. Ricci also provided comments to assist staff on developing a forest notification process. She suggested DCR integrate the policy with the Stewardship Council Oversight Policy, coordinate with the Department of Fisheries and Wildlife, establish a way for forest users to provide information before cutting plans are approved, such as bringing rare species and cultural/archaeological information to the table, and establish parameters on how forestry can take place where resource management plans are not in place yet.
- d. **J. McCaffrey**, from Sierra Club, thanked the Council for designating the forest reserves. Mr. McCaffrey passed out packets on high ground telecommunications siting, stating that the Sierra Club is not taking a position on the issue, but wants DCR to take careful consideration of the FCC guidelines (1996) which allow municipalities to resell the service and allow other competing groups to claim fairness. Councilor Lee suggested getting a legal recommendation from the Dept. of Energy and Telecommunications. Councilor Wolf asked for some clarity from DCR on the Council's role in telecommunications siting.
- e. **Mike Ryan**, from Friends of Middlesex Fells, inquired as to when the Historic Parkway Guidelines would be ready for Stewardship Council review. Commissioner Burrington replied that this is targeted for the November meeting. Mr. Ryan also stated his concern of the Council's role after the guidelines are approved and dealing with enforcement issues that will arise from the document. He stated that the DCR rangers have no enforcement capabilities.

***Meeting adjourned 3:05***